



## **Chef Charles Says...**

A newsletter for congregate meal participants for the month of January

**Chef Charles Club is defined as a group of people who meet with a leader or instructor to learn and discuss how nutrition and physical activity can make a difference in their lives. Participants receive a monthly Chef Charles newsletter from the instructor.**

In 2009 Chef Charles focused on encouraging participants to eat more fruits and veggies. Reviewing the post survey, instructors do make a difference. Chef Charles Club members who participated in activities reported eating more fruits and veggies at meals (56%) and snacks (50%) while those who **just read** the newsletter alone reported more produce consumption at meals (40%) and snacks (39%). While both groups were eating more fruits and veggies, those with an instructor made a bigger change. The time you spend preparing for a Chef Charles Club is valuable for the health of your participants. **Thank you.**

In 2010, Chef Charles wants to answer your questions. Each month you will find a column that answers questions from groups that use Chef Charles. What questions do you have? Start thinking about them now and discuss it at your meal site. You can send questions to [susanklein50@gmail.com](mailto:susanklein50@gmail.com).

You can also look forward to columns on the importance of protein in your food selection, increasing your consumption of fruits and veggies and looking for vitamin D in your diet.

Chef Charles is also concerned that many older adults who are eligible are not participating in the Food Stamp Program. It is now called SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program); in Iowa the program is called Food Assistance. As an instructor for Chef Charles you can help those in your club understand that the SNAP program can make a big difference in their food budget. Consider the following activities:

- Invite a Department of Human Services Staff member to your site to talk about the Food Assistance program.
- Bookmark [www.benefitscheckup.org](http://www.benefitscheckup.org) on site computers for participants to visit.
- Remind participants that the EBT cards are handy to use at local stores for food purchases.
- Encourage participants to apply on-line for Food Assistance [www.yesfood.iowa.gov](http://www.yesfood.iowa.gov).

To get feedback regarding the success of the Chef Charles program in helping participants eat healthier, be more active and have safe food, we encourage you to use the questions at the end of the instructor's guide. Ask your group the questions at the beginning of your Chef Charles meeting and then again at the end. This will reinforce key points and identify if the participants know the answers.



### Pick a Better...

#### Props:

- Can of soda pop
- Box of breakfast cereal
- Pecan pie nutrition label
- Measuring teaspoon
- White granular sugar

### Sugar

Extra sugar has been linked to the growing obesity epidemic and related illnesses. But how much is too much? **The American Heart Association has proposed specific guidelines: Most women should consume no more than 25 grams (about 6 teaspoons) of added sugars a day; most men, no more than 37.5 grams (about 9 teaspoons). With 4 calories per gram of sugar, that is no more than 100 calories of added sugars for women, and no more than 150 for men.**

It is easy to go over these limits, and most American do. In fact, the average American consumes about 90 grams (22 teaspoons) of added sugar a day which equals 335 calories. Common sources of added sugar are sodas, other sweetened beverages like fruit drinks, desserts, candy, and breakfast cereals. Many other foods, even ketchup, have sugar added as well.

Of course, some sugars are found naturally in foods such as lactose in milk and fructose in fruits. These sugars are okay, since they are accompanied by other healthful substances in the food. But nutrition labels do not distinguish between natural and added sugar. To tell if sugar has been added, check the ingredient list for any form of sugar.

#### *Common Added Sugar Ingredients*

- |                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| ◆ Brown sugar              | ◆ Agave nectar            |
| ◆ Corn syrup               | ◆ Evaporated cane juice   |
| ◆ High fructose corn syrup | ◆ Fruit juice concentrate |
| ◆ Malt syrup               | ◆ Sucrose                 |
| ◆ Honey                    | ◆ Glucose                 |
| ◆ Molasses                 | ◆ Raw sugar               |

*Congregate Meal sites are now offering more fruit for dessert as a way to increase nutrition of the meals and reduce added sugar.*

### Activity

Ask the group: You would certainly taste the sugar in this can of pop, right? How about this cereal? Many of you may even add sugar to your breakfast cereal. Do any of you know how much sugar is recommended for you to eat daily? This recommendation has been vague but the American Heart Association has recently provided a recommendation. **Read recommendation in article in yellow.**

Grams of sugar are confusing, so let me teach you how to convert the grams to teaspoons. All you need to know is that a teaspoon of sugar is equal to 4 grams.



Let's look at the soda pop nutrition label. How many grams of sugar are in the can of pop? In a sample can of soda pop there is 39 grams of sugar. Divide the 39 grams by 4 and that is equal to almost 10 teaspoons of sugar. Let's measure out the 10 teaspoons. Now let's do the same with the breakfast cereal. And last let's look at the nutrition label for a piece of pecan pie. With 33 grams of sugar, how many teaspoons do we have? (8+ teaspoons)

It is important to remember that the sugar listed on the nutrition facts label includes all sugar, not just added sugar. To find the added sugar in a food you need to look at the list of ingredients.

***Review list of sugar sources in the article.***

And one last point about sugar. Have you noticed that our meals are offering more fruit as a dessert? This is one great way to limit sugar and still satisfy your sweet tooth.

<b>Nutrition Facts</b>	
Serving Size 1 slice 133g (133 g)	
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b> 541	Calories from Fat 200
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 22g	34%
Saturated Fat 4g	18%
Trans Fat	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 56mg	19%
<b>Sodium</b> 319mg	13%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 79g	26%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Sugars 33g	
<b>Protein</b> 6g	
Vitamin A 5% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 3% • Iron 7%	
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
© www.NutritionData.com	



## Get the News

### Props:

- Picture of the sun

## Low Vitamin D Increases Health Risk for Older Adults

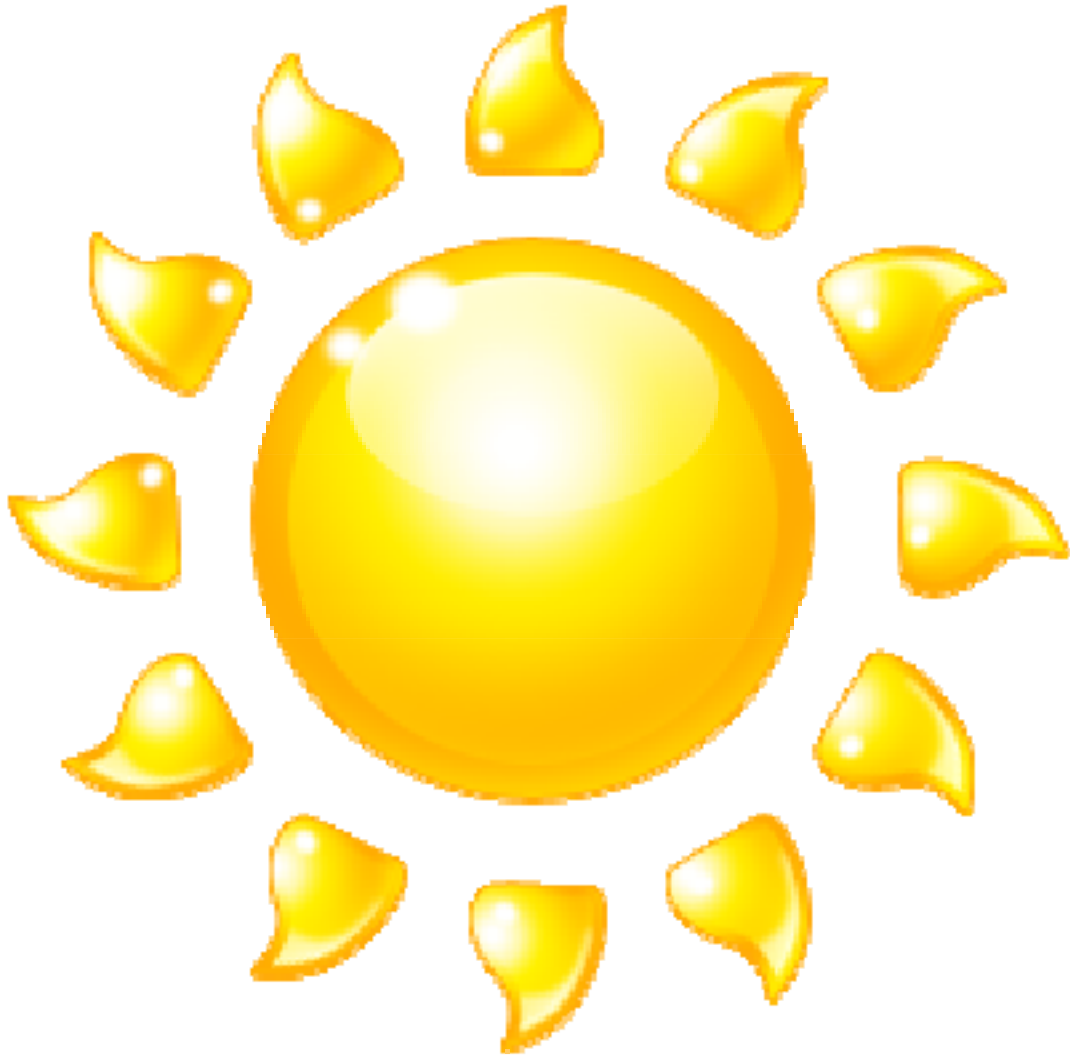
Low levels of vitamin D appear to increase the risk of death in older adults. Skin produces vitamin D when directly exposed to the sun. But older people, particularly those living in northern regions, rarely obtain sufficient sun exposure for adequate vitamin D production and need supplements to achieve healthy vitamin D levels. Increasingly, evidence points to health risks from inadequate vitamin D. According to a recent study, after taking into account a variety of factors that could influence the results, low vitamin D was independently associated with an increased risk of death from any cause, but particularly from **heart disease** in this report. Current vitamin D recommendations for people 71 years and older are 600 IU and this may be inadequate. More study is needed to determine the amount needed. **For now, older adults should discuss with their doctor what their level of vitamin D is and how they can safely increase their intake of the vitamin.**

*Source: Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, September 2009*

### Activity

Ask the group: Can anyone remind me what vitamin is associated with sunshine? (vitamin D) And do you remember why vitamin D is so important for our health? (most will answer bone health) A recent study reports that vitamin D does more than that. It seems many conditions can be influenced by vitamin D, but especially heart disease. While the current recommended amount of vitamin D is 600 IU many researchers believe we need more. Matthew Rowling, PhD at Iowa State University suggests that we might need as much 4000 IU of Vitamin D to obtain the many benefits of this vitamin.

In fact, there is a national task force that is preparing to give new recommendations this spring. For now our best advice is to look for foods with vitamin D and if you think you could be at risk for low levels of vitamin D talk to your doctor about a test and follow up recommendations if your level is low.





## Chef Charles Asks the Questions

### Props:

- Chef Charles apron
- Carlene Russell name tag
- One volunteer

### Meet Carlene Russell

#### Carlene, can you tell us about yourself?

Carlene Russell is a registered and licensed dietitian with a special interest in older adults. She works in the Iowa Department on Aging that is located one block from the State Capitol in Des Moines. Her department administers the Older Americans Act programs including the nutrition program. In collaboration with 13 Iowa Area Agencies on Aging, the department served 1.6 million congregate and 1.3 million home delivered meals last year.

#### Carlene please tell us about your job at the department.

I manage the nutrition program that includes making sure that healthy meals are provided, and nutrition education and health promotion programs are available to help older Iowans stay as healthy as possible. It is well known that for older adults, eating healthy and being physically active are keys to enjoying a higher quality of life. Participating in a Chef Charles program can give you good ideas for how to do this. Participating in a congregate meal program can provide you with 1/3 of the nutrition you need for the day (including your fruits and vegetables that you may not always eat at home) so the congregate meal should be viewed as an investment in your health.

#### If you had to pick your favorite meal of the day, what would it be?

Breakfast is my favorite meal. It is a part of my morning ritual. It is funny how we develop habits. Several years ago, as I was trying to incorporate my nutrition knowledge into action I chose to improve my breakfast, and it has now become a one-bowl habit. I start with thicker cut oatmeal, cooking it in the microwave with skim milk rather than water. During the last 30 seconds of cooking, I add ½ cup of frozen blueberries. Then I add either ½ cup of fresh strawberries when they are in season or ½ of a banana and ⅓ cup of walnuts. I top this with more skim milk.

#### Why do older adults need to pay special attention to breakfast?

As we age, our bodies need fewer calories. So if we balance the calories with what is needed to maintain a healthy weight, we need to eat smart. The best foods to help do this are the ones that have the most nutrition and the least number of calories which means the food is nutrient dense. Many breakfast items are nutrient dense foods. Having breakfast in the morning “breaks-the-fast” and causes an increase in the metabolism rate. During the night we







typically go 8-10 hours without eating. During this time body metabolism rate slows down. Having breakfast in the morning breaks the fast and causes an increase the metabolism rate. Breakfast eaters have a better chance to have a healthy weight, but also to consume the nutrients they need for good health.

### Activity

Let's do an interview. You will need a volunteer to act as Chef Charles and you (the instructor) will be Carlene Russell. Have the volunteer wear your Chef Charles apron. If you can't find the apron, make a Chef Charles name tag for the volunteer. The volunteer will read the questions in red and you will answer with the information from Carlene Russell. Begin with the introduction of Carlene.

**Each month you can submit questions to Chef Charles and we will select questions to include in the newsletter. Please submit questions to Chef Charles at [susanklein50@gmail.com](mailto:susanklein50@gmail.com)**

 <h2>Carlene Russell</h2>	
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### Be Active

#### Props:

- Stretch band or a canned food item to use as a hand weight

### Strength Training

Maintaining your strength may help keep you out of the hospital. A study of 3,000 70-80 year olds found that 55 percent had been hospitalized at least once in the previous five years. The study found those people with the lowest muscle density and weakest grip strength were more likely to be the ones being hospitalized. To stay strong, get involved in strength training at least two days a week and do aerobic exercise, like walking most days.

Source: Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, Vol. 57, Page 1411.

### Activity

Ask the group: Do you know why I am using this stretch band? (*To keep my muscles strong.*) Strong muscles may be an indicator for people and their risk for being in the hospital. Let's look at the



article and see what it says. This sounds like one more good reason for us to use our stretch bands.

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## Food Safety

### Props:

- See red and underlined items in article

## Kitchen Safety Tips

Keep your kitchen safe by following these ideas:

- Stay in the kitchen while something is cooking. If you must leave, take a reminder like a pot holder or a wooden spoon. This will remind you to go back to the kitchen. potholder
- Keep things that can burn, like paper towels or pot holders away from the cooking area. paper towel
- Keep handles of pots on the stove turned inward. Cook on back burners when possible. small pan
- Look closely at your kitchen floor. Are there any items that can trip you when you are carrying hot food to the table? small rug
- Keep appliance cords away from the edge of the counter. It is helpful that newer small appliances are required to have short electrical cords. appliance cord

### Activity

It is a good time of year to take inventory of safety hazards in your kitchen. Let me remind you of some of the steps you can take to make the kitchen safe. *Read the item and share the prop*

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## Snacks

### Teaching Points:

- To speed up thawing, place in colander and run hot water over the spinach.
- While spinach is in pan stir constantly to avoid cooking or burning.
- Do not cover pan.
- This is a make-ahead dish that develops flavor while refrigerated.
- Serve with carrots, cucumbers or other veggies.

## Spinach Vegetable Dip

- 1 cup frozen spinach
- 16 oz low-fat sour cream
- 8 oz frozen peppers or ½ cup fresh peppers
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp dry ranch dressing mix

1. Cut one clove of garlic into tiny pieces. Place a pan on the stove and spray with non-stick spray. Lightly brown garlic.
2. Place frozen spinach and peppers in pan with the garlic. You may want to rinse the frozen spinach with warm water in a colander to start the thawing process. Cook the vegetables till tender and the water evaporates stirring continuously. Do not cover pan when cooking to allow evaporation. Cook approximately 10 minutes on medium heat. Let stand for 5-10 minutes to cool.
3. Chop mixture on a cutting board until the peppers are cut into tiny pieces.
4. Stir sour cream into dry ranch mix.
5. In a refrigerator storage container cut the 2nd clove of garlic into very tiny pieces and place in sour cream. Mix with vegetables.
6. Add black pepper or paprika if desired.
7. Refrigerate for an hour or more (the longer, the better).

Note: A serving is approximately 2 tablespoons. Calories-41; 2 gm fat; 30 mg sodium; 11% vitamin C; 5% calcium; 88 mg potassium

## Pick a better snack



## Recipes

### Teaching Points:

- You can store up to 7 days.
- To add color use purple grapes.
- This is great to take to a potluck.
- Fruit and juice is used to add sweet flavor without sugar.

## Grapes and Grains

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 2 cups cooked barley (do not overcook)
- 1 ½ cups seedless, halved grapes
- ½ cup sliced celery
- ¼ cup sliced green onion
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon black pepper

In mixing bowl, whisk together oil, lemon and orange juices. Add barley, grapes, celery, and onions, tossing to coat. Season with salt and pepper; chill until serving time.

Makes 4 - ½ cup servings. Each ½ cup serving provides 203 calories; 7 gm fat; 3 gm protein; 34 gm carbohydrates; 4 gm fiber; 14 mg sodium; 248 mg potassium. Recipe courtesy of Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH).



# Instructors' Guide January 2010



## Did You Learn Any New Ideas?

1. What helps Chef Charles participants make the most improvement in eating fruits and veggies in 2009?
2. How many grams of sugar equal a teaspoon?
3. Which health condition is greatly influenced by low intake of vitamin D according to a recent study?
4. How many different food groups is in Carlene's favorite meal?
5. Where should the handles of pots be placed when cooking?

## Your Answers

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## Order Your Materials (provided to Iowa Nutrition Network Partners Only)

Contact Name

Congregate Meal Site

Address

City, State and Zip

Phone Number

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Month	# Newsletters	# Incentives
January 2010	____ Congregate Meal Site Participants	The incentive is a potholder. Please indicate how many are needed _____

Return to: Marilyn Jones,  
IDPH, Lucas Building, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
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or by FAX 515-281-4913. For questions, call Marilyn at 800-532-1579 or 515-281-6047.



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### Your Answers

Reading and participating in  
Chef Charles

4

Heart disease

3

Inward

### Chef Charles Says...

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This material was funded by the Iowa Nutrition Network and USDA's SNAP. SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. Food assistance can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more about Iowa's Food Assistance Program, contact the local Iowa Department of Human Services office serving the county where you live, or call toll-free at 1-877-937-3663.

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